Meet Sofia Yassini, 8

Last week, presidential candidate Donald Trump vowed that he would ban Muslims from entering the U.S. Now young minds suffering from Islamophobia are wondering, Who is the screaming man on TV?

metroNEWS

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Vancouver metro

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High cost of Christmas

VANCITY REPORT

Vancouverites wary of holiday overspending

Matt Kieltyka
Metro | Vancouver

Vancouverites are feeling the Christmas crunch, according to a new holiday poll conducted by Vancity.

The credit union found that 41 per cent of survey respondents spent "way too much" (19.98 per cent) or "slightly too much" (21.03) on holiday gifts last year, averaging $809.56 on presents.

Despite so many people over-spending in 2014, people are bracing for a similar hit to the wallet now that the holiday season is once again upon us.

According to the poll, people expect to shell out an average of $803.96 on gifts in 2015.

"It's definitely a reality we see. I've been there as well," said Darwin Sauer, vice president of communications at Vancity.

To avoid another year of sticker shock, Sauer recommends a few steps to help gift buyers take control of their holiday spending.

The first thing to do is review last year's expenses, identify where you overspent and develop a plan to avoid making the same mistake.

Secondly, people should make an itemized list of gifts and tally up the cost to make sure it fits within their budgets.

Then, Sauer says, people should think about non-traditional gifts, a trend that was borne out in the poll.

The majority of survey respondents (69.06 per cent) indicated they'd prefer to receive something other than a purchased item as a gift.

That can include anything from handmade gifts, donations in kind and providing someone with a unique "experience" — rather than a physical gift — to simply giving out cash or gift cards, which Sauer said can be easier to budget for.

Despite people trending away from wanting purchased items, 55.66 per cent of people said it's still their preferred type of gift to give others.

MEOW-CHACCINO

Cat café opens for business in Vancouver. metroNEWS

TEREZA VERENCA/METRO

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metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

Slavery, child labour tied to global shrimp supply chains, including Walmart, Red Lobster. **Business**

Park caretakers' cottages might be home to Syrians

POLITICS

Board puts topic of short-term housing on the table

Emily Jackson
Metro | Vancouver

Three cosy cottages that traditionally housed caretakers of Vancouver's parks might be used as temporary homes for Syrian refugees.

Park board commissioners will discuss Monday night whether they want to provide the vacant houses as homes for government-assisted refugees who arrive in the new year.

If they vote in favour of the idea (a decision was not made by Metro's deadline), staff will investigate the operational requirements before a final decision can be made in January.

Commissioner Catherine Evans tabled the motion after learning housing is the top challenge for newcomers.

She immediately thought of the caretaker cottages, as the park board is in the process of gradually converting them for use by artists, sports groups or community food organizations.

Of the 71 houses, about half are still occupied and all but three — they're located at Riley Park, Granville Park and Nanaimo Park — are dedicated to other uses.

The Vancouver Park Board field house at Granville Park on West 14th Avenue and Fir Street is attached to public washrooms, is next door to a lawn bowling club and across the street from a seniors' home. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

"It's not a big solution, but I think in this crisis in affordability and housing in this city, every small little bit helps," Evans said before the meeting. "That would be a really nice and safe place to land while looking for a longer-term housing solution."

> **It's not a big solution, but I think in this crisis in affordability and housing in this city, every small little bit helps.**
> Park board commissioner Catherine Evans

The cottages are small so they'd only be appropriate for couples or families with a small child, Evans said, adding the house at Riley Park even has a little playground.

Preliminary concerns from the public included placing refugees in isolated spaces and taking them away from arts groups, Evans said. But she noted these cottages are on the edge of the parks near other homes and have yet to be promised to the arts.

Should the park board approve the idea, staff will investigate whether the houses are suitable to live in.

They will need furniture for which the board has no budget, but Evans said community organizations have expressed interest in partnering with the board. Evans believes the program will be cost-neutral.

Evans is the lone Vision Vancouver commissioner on the board, so she will need support from the Green Party and the Non-Partisan Association.

NPA board chairman John Coupar did not want to comment on his position before the meeting.

But Green Party commissioner Stuart Mackinnon introduced a complementary motion asking the park board to work with the city, the community centre associations and the Immigrant Services Society of B.C. to help support and welcome refugees in the community.

RETAIL

8 shops vie to sell legal pot

Eight stores have taken the lead in the race to be Vancouver's first "legal" marijuana shop.

The City of Vancouver has revealed the addresses of the eight stores farthest along in the process to get a development permit and business licence for a medical marijuana-related business.

Located across the city, from Kitsilano and West Point Grey to Renfrew-Collingwood and Sunset, these shops were previously zoned for use as hair salons, barber shops, general offices and retail stores.

It's the first time the city has disclosed the locations of stores most likely to succeed under the city's new scheme to regulate marijuana dispensaries. Of the 176 applicants to the program, only 11 were located in permitted zones and were at least 300 metres away from schools, community centres, youth facilities and other marijuana-related businesses.

Thirty other businesses met all the initial requirements aside from being too close to other marijuana-related shops, so the city is ranking them to see which ones get to stay put.

The city sent letters late last week to the eight stores' neighbours to give them a chance to provide written feedback by Christmas Eve.

While dispensaries are not legal in Canada, the city moved to regulate them in order to collect business fees and to decrease the risks to youth.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

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Child-voice ministry report draws anger

PLECAS

Study critical of youth rep Turpel-Lafond, who fires back

A new report that puts British Columbia's children's watchdog in the crosshairs of a malfunctioning ministry is riddled with faulty conclusions, including that the deaths of some children in care is inevitable, said Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond.

Long-time bureaucrat Bob Plecas released a report Monday into the Ministry of Children and Family Development which criticized Turpel-Lafond, the representative of children and youth, while praising the ministry for its work despite being starved of resources.

Deaths and serious injuries to children in care are rare, but there is a great appetite for blaming workers and the ministry for "perceived and real failings," he wrote.

Plecas said staff will never be able to police every family to prevent abuse and even murder.

"We can make our kids safe, safer than they are now, but we will never be 100 per cent successful," the report stated.

Turpel-Lafond said she couldn't support that assumption which colours the former deputy minister's entire report.

"I have a number of concerns about Mr. Plecas's report, probably the most significant one is the idea that Mr. Plecas has a conclusion which I can only describe as a dystopian and cynical conclusion," she told a news conference.

She has repeatedly criticized the ministry's performance, and Plecas said in his report the relationship has become strained.

The watchdog's numerous recommendations over the years have overwhelmed the ministry and become "part of the bigger management problem," he wrote.

Her oversight role should be taken over by the ministry, the report said.

Turpel-Lafond noted that her office has been reviewed twice by the Standing Committee on Children and Youth, and said she would be open to another review.

Opposition NDP Leader John Horgan disagreed with the report's recommendation.

"I don't think, under any circumstances, we should reduce the amount of scrutiny government officials are under, when it comes to our most vulnerable citizens. Quite the contrary," he said.

Horgan instead called for Stephanie Cadieux to be replaced as children's minister.

Ernie Crey, chief councillor of the Fraser Valley's Cheam First Nation and a former social worker, had scathing comments on Plecas's report and defended Turpel-Lafond, calling her an "outstanding champion." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond expressed "concerns" about the report. ERIC DREGER/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

> **We will never be 100 per cent successful.**
> Bob Plecas' report

MISSING AND MURDERED WOMEN

Province vows $3M to highway safety

Enhanced transit routes, expanded driver-training programs and more roadside webcams make up the core of a multimillion-dollar plan aimed at improving safety along a stretch of British Columbia highway renowned for missing and murdered women.

B.C.'s Transport Minister Todd Stone announced a long-awaited $3-million strategy for the so-called Highway of Tears on Monday, saying delays in government action were the result of extensive consultation with local stakeholders.

"I would have liked to have been making this announcement many, many, many months ago, but we needed to go through this rigorous process of engagement and discussion," said Stone.

"Today is about transitioning from the discussion to action."

Eighteen women, many of them aboriginal, have disappeared or been murdered along Highway 16 or adjacent routes since the 1970s. The infamous 750-kilometre span of road meanders through an isolated region of B.C.'s Interior, between Prince Rupert and Prince George.

Stone's announcement comes shortly after the federal government went public with plans to launch a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women. Many who have called for the inquiry have highlighted the tragic history of the Highway of Tears.

An RCMP report stated last year nearly 1,200 aboriginal women were murdered or went missing across Canada between 1980 and 2012.

Monday's announcement in B.C. committed $1.6 million over two years on a cost-sharing basis with communities to extend pre-existing transit along Highway 16.

An additional $750,000 over three years will go towards helping communities buy and operate transit vehicles, as well as $150,000 over three years to increase the number of licensed drivers in First Nations communities.

> **I would have liked to have been making this announcement many, many, many months ago.**
> Transport Minister Todd Stone

The province earmarked a final $500,000 in infrastructure funding over two years to install more transit shelters and highway webcams.

"In addition to enhancing the actual transportation options that people have in the corridor, we want people to also know that we have an eye on safety as well," said Stone.

Overseeing the program's implementation is an advisory panel, made up of representatives from the province, local governments, health authorities and First Nations. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Mila Zep, 4, makes a new furry friend at Catfé, which officially opened to the public on Monday. TEREZA VERENCA/METRO

Fur with your foam? Purristas pour it on

ANIMAL ADOPTION

Coffee with a side of feline friendship at Catfé opening

Tereza Verenca
Metro | Vancouver

Dozens of feline and coffee lovers gathered at Vancouver's first-ever cat café on Monday to mark the long-awaited grand opening.

Many made reservations to Catfé weeks in advance while others just randomly walked through the door.

Rachel Zep was in the area with her daughter Mila when she saw a Facebook post about the event and decided to check it out. Catherine McDonald and Brent Cordeiro were also in attendance and told Metro they were surprised a business like this — which allows customers to have a latte while curling up with one of the café's furry companions — wasn't started up sooner.

"It's very Vancouver," said Cordeiro.

McDonald added the cat lounge is a great place for those who can't have a cat where they're renting.

Melanie Antweiler, meanwhile, dropped off her kids at school prior to popping into the café.

> **I was kind of missing that companionship.**
> Michelle Furbacher, Catfé

"They don't know I'm here," she laughed. "But I'm bringing them next week. This is just a treat to come and meet a couple new kitties."

For Catfé owner Michelle Furbacher, Monday was a long time coming. The project started nearly two years ago through a crowdfunding campaign.

At the time, Furbacher's own cat had passed away, which prompted her to look for a career change.

"I was kind of missing that feline companionship," she said.

After stumbling on a video about a cat café in Japan, she had her answer.

Right now, there are five cats at Catfé, with plans to have up to 12 at any given time. All have been taken from the BC SPCA and are available for adoption.

Only 16 people are allowed into the cat lounge at once, Furbacher noted, to avoid overwhelming them.

Due to its much-anticipated opening, people are encouraged to go online and make a reservation for Catfé. There's currently a two-week wait list.

IN BRIEF

Businesses call for logging ban in Walbran Valley

Business leaders in Port Renfrew, a community that once thrived on forestry, are calling for a ban on logging in the nearby Walbran Valley. The valley is full of ancient old-growth trees, and the Chamber of Commerce says tourists who come to see them have created a multibillion-dollar economy along Vancouver Island's west coast.

Some of the old trees are protected within the boundary of the Carmanah-Walbran Provincial Park, but chamber president Dan Hagar says logging is underway in the rest of the valley.

The chamber, which represents 73 local businesses, has released a statement calling on the B.C. government to immediately ban logging in the unprotected portion of the valley. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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IN BRIEF

Report released on assisted dying

Physician-assisted dying should be publicly funded by Canadian provinces, available to adults of any age, and not put doctors at risk of criminal prosecution, an expert advisory panel said Monday. The recommendations were among 43 in the final report from the Provincial-Territorial Expert Advisory Group. THE CANADIAN PRESS

MEDICAL EXPENSES

Sick boy will not get coverage

Morgan Doucet CONTRIBUTED

A New Brunswick mother says she's devastated after the provincial government rejected her request to fund an expensive drug treatment for her seriously ill son.

Morgan Doucet is 10 and has a rare blood condition called morquio syndrome that stunts growth and causes multiple health problems, including heart and airway disease.

There is no cure, but in 2014 Health Canada approved a new drug to treat the condition called Vimizim.

Last year, Doucet's doctor asked the province to pay for the treatment, which can cost about $200,000 a year. But in November his mother, Carole Mazerolle, got word the province had turned them down.

"I cried," said Mazerolle.

"I find that terrible. I have a sick child. They have a treatment there that could help him, and they won't give it to me."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

QUEBEC 2014 BLAZE No criminal charges will be laid in the fire that killed 32 people at a seniors' residence in Quebec nearly two years ago, the Crown announced. FRANCES DROUIN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Mom tells of daughter's trafficking

PROSTITUTION

'Boyfriend pimp' took her daughter away

Hindy Pennock would drive around in circles until the early hours looking for her 13-year-old daughter. That's how it started.

Then she noticed a change in her daughter's underwear, toward lacy, lower-cut undies.

"We taught our daughter not to get into cars with strangers, but we did not prepare her for a good-looking guy to walk into her life and traffic her. We never knew about 'boyfriend' pimps," she said.

Hindy Pennock was a stay-at-home mom. Her husband was a businessman. They lived in a nice neighbourhood in Winnipeg with their two daughters. Then, they lost one.

For 12 years, Jessica was trapped, trafficked from Winnipeg to Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver, forced to have sex for money.

When she first ran away from home, she was gone a weekend. Then she was gone for a few weeks, then months. She would call home, but only for 30 seconds, enough to say, "I love you, Mommy. I'll be home sometime." Enough for Pennock to know her daughter was, at least, alive.

When Pennock looks back, she can identify some warning signs she missed all those years ago. She is publicly sharing her story to help others.

"We never thought in a million years that this could happen to her. Never, ever," she said.

The Pennocks changed provinces when Jessica was 10 and she was "horrifically" bullied by her new classmates. "We saw this bright, self-reliant little girl disappear. She just started to vanish," Pennock said.

To help her daughter make friends, Pennock drove Jessica to a recreation centre. There, she met a boy who gave her crack cocaine, but said it was just like marijuana. Soon she was addicted.

She started to lie and run away. At 15, she told her parents she was moving in with her boyfriend, but never let them meet him. Some days she would come home with her nails painted or her hair done; other days she would come home "beaten black and blue" with boot marks on her body. Jessica was silent when her parents asked what was going on.

Pennock said they went to police, psychiatrists, teachers and doctors, but no one could help.

Often the only place parents can seek help from is advocacy groups that work with victims and understand the dynamic.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Trump's comments are hurting children

UNITED STATES

Young minds suffer from Islamophobic sentiments

A backlash against American Muslims is leaving a mark on some of the nation's youngest minds.

After seeing U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump call on television for barring Muslims from entering the country, Sofia Yassini, 8, checked the locks on her family's home in Plano, Texas, imagining the army would take them away. She raced to her room and stuffed a pair of Barbie dolls, a tub of peanut butter and a toothbrush into a bag. She insisted on bringing boots for the long boat ride she imagined was coming.

When her mother, Melissa, arrived home from work, Sofia ran into her arms and cried.

"I want people to understand the impact that their words have on these children," said Melissa Yassini, who described the experience in a Facebook post that had been shared more than 21,000 times as of Monday. "We often forget, we're waging war on one another with words, and we're adults. We can take it. The kids are suffering with this. They go to school every day and they're afraid to tell people they're Muslim. This has to stop."

Anti-Muslim sentiment was building in the days before 14 people were killed Dec. 2 in the massacre at a disability centre in Southern California by a Muslim couple investigators say were inspired at least in part by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group. Some governors had already said they wouldn't allow Syrians fleeing civil war into their states because of extremist fears. Experts say Trump's call Dec. 7 to keep all Muslims from entering the U.S. — a plan he said would apply only temporarily and to non-citizens — only fanned the flames.

Sofia Yassini, 8, receives a hug from her mother.
LM OTERO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Muslim parents say their children hear disparaging remarks in their own communities, see hateful T-shirts, and have had friends abandon them.

Ahad Khan, 12, came home from school in rural Westminster, Md., in tears because his best friend called him a future terrorist, according to Ahad's father, Raza Khan. Khan, the chairman of the science department at Carroll Community College, shared Ahad's experience in an open letter to Trump on Facebook. As of Monday, it had been shared more than 4,300 times.

As Khan tucked his son in last week, he left him with the words he recited when he became a U.S. citizen two decades ago: "One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

"I don't know why, I don't know how people forget that," Khan said later. "We have to; otherwise we're dividing ourselves." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

> **One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.**
> Line from U.S. Pledge of Allegiance, recited by one father to his son last week

REFUGEES

EU to pay to house migrants in Greece

The European Union pledged Monday to spend 80 million euros ($88 million US) to house migrants in Greece even as it seeks tougher procedures for asylum-seekers travelling to the continent.

Kristalina Georgieva, the EU Commissioner for Budget and Human resources, signed an agreement for a rent subsidy program for up to 20,000 people next year.

Thousands of stranded refugees are currently being housed in old venues from the 2004 Olympics, at camps on Greek islands, or are sleeping in tents pitched in city squares and parks in Athens.

"The 80 million euros is for the year 2016 ... after that it would be assessed. It could be expanded," Georgieva told The Associated Press. "The number involved over the year would be quite a lot higher than 20,000."

Nearly 800,000 migrants and refugees have crossed through Greece this year, hoping to travel to northern Europe. But Macedonia and other Balkan countries last month toughened their border rules, restricting crossings to those from war-torn nations like Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan and stranding others. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Cosby countersues women
Bill Cosby fired back Monday at seven women suing him for defamation.

In a countersuit, Cosby alleges the women made "malicious, opportunistic, and false and defamatory accusations." against him. Cosby is seeking monetary damages "to the maximum extent permitted by law." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Troops overtake stronghold
Syrian troops and allied militiamen seized control of a military airbase near Damascus Monday. It's a rare victory in an area considered an opposition stronghold. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Taxi industry hits back

RIDESHARING

Unlike Uber, new app tacks on service provider's fees

Canada's taxi industry has a new tool in its fight against the rise of Uber. The Ride, a new app launched on Monday, works similarly to Uber by offering passengers a more tech-savvy way to connect with local taxi-cab companies.

Like Uber, users must open a personal profile and then use the cellphone's GPS location feature before they hail a cab through the virtual service.

Unlike Uber, The Ride comes with extra fees through your wireless provider. The app will charge a fixed $2 "convenience fee" for hailing a nearby taxi.

In smaller towns, where local cab companies may not support the app yet, The Ride will charge $1 to connect the passenger to a local dispatch centre over the phone.

Toronto-based CellWand Communications created The Ride. CellWand is the company behind #TAXI, a voice phone service that connects customers to a local cab company for a service fee. CellWand's new app also provides real-time public transit schedules for 75 cities and communities, with plans to roll out data on bike-sharing services next year.

Taxi-cab operators have been clashing with Uber, urging local governments in some cities to ban the service over concerns such as proper licensing and insurance. Toronto cab drivers staged a protest last week to back their call for local bylaws that would clamp down on UberX drivers.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

A police officer rides his bike between a row of cabs blocking the street during a recent taxi drivers day of protest against Uber in Toronto. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

INVESTIGATION

Major retailers sell slave-peeled shrimp

Poor migrant workers and children are being sold to factories in Thailand and forced to peel shrimp that ends up in global supply chains, including those of Walmart and Red Lobster, an investigation has found.

At the Gig Peeling Factory, nearly 100 Burmese labourers were trapped, most working for almost nothing. They spent 16 hours a day with their hands in ice water, ripping the guts, heads, tails and shells off shrimp.

"They didn't let us rest," said Eae Hpaw, 16, her arms a patchwork of scars from shrimp-related infections and allergies. "We stopped working around 7 in the evening. We would take a shower and sleep. Then we would start again around 3 in the morning."

Pervasive human trafficking has helped turn Thailand into one of the world's biggest shrimp providers. Despite repeated promises by businesses and government, abuses persist, fuelled by corruption and complicity among authorities.

Hundreds of shrimp-peeling sheds are hidden in plain sight in Samut Sakhon, an hour outside Bangkok, some with slaves locked inside.

Last month, Associated Press journalists followed and filmed trucks loaded with freshly peeled shrimp from the Gig shed to major Thai exporting companies.

U.S. customs records show the shrimp made its way into the supply chains of major U.S. food stores and retailers such as Walmart, Kroger, Whole Foods, Dollar General and Petco, along with restaurants such as Red Lobster and Olive Garden.

It also entered supply chains for some well-known seafood brands and pet foods, including Chicken of the Sea and Fancy Feast.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Win Win Than, 25, who worked in a shrimp shed in Samut Sakhon, Thailand, to pay off her $550 US debt. She said she tried to run away but was caught and handcuffed in a room. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Big banks partnering with financial tech rivals

Financial technology startups are partnering with the very banks the so-called fintech companies had set out to upheave. CIBC has waded into online lending through Montreal-based upstart Thinking Capital, Scotiabank has invested in Kabbage, a U.S.-based lender, and Royal Bank CEO Dave McKay has noted the importance of collaborating with early stage companies. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Tuesday, December 15, 2015

KATE WEBB CAPITAL IDEA

In all other provinces, the party systems are clear, consistent and don't leave voters confused. All I'm asking Santa for this Christmas is a name-change from the B.C. Liberals.

As an Ontario transplant who has lived in British Columbia for more than a decade, there has always been a jarring contrast for me between the B.C. Liberals' party name and their policies.

Now, with the progressive, shiny new Prime Minister Justin Trudeau leading the federal Liberals in Ottawa, the dissonance has grown even more unnerving.

B.C. is one of only two provinces in Canada led by a coalition of federal Liberal and Conservative supporters — and the only one that insists on calling itself Liberal regardless. (The only other Tory-Lib collaboration at least has the decency to call itself the appropriately amorphous "Saskatchewan Party").

In all other provinces, Liberals are generally centrist, NDP are centre-left, and Conservatives, PCs or Wild-What-Have-Yous are centre-right, or right. The party systems are clear, consistent and don't leave voters confused about what anyone stands for.

Is that so much to ask? I hope not, because all I'm asking Santa for this Christmas is a name-change from the B.C. Liberals.

And Santa, if you're reading this, I don't really care what they rename themselves. The B.C. Progressive Conservatives. The B.C. Party. The Christy Clark Show (though they'll have to check the copyright for that last one). Any of those would be the perfect thing to wake up to on Christmas morning.

B.C. Liberals have repeatedly shown their conservative colours. Keeping taxes low trumps all other considerations.

Some might protest that Premier Christy Clark has deep roots in the federal Liberal party. Her ex-husband Mark Marissen is a senior strategist for the federal Liberals, and her communications chief Ben Chin used to work for the Ontario Liberals, which — unlike Clark's party — actively campaigned for Trudeau in the last federal election.

But the premier chooses to surround herself with staunch conservatives, such as Mary Polak, Bill Bennett and Rich Coleman. She also tried to run in 2005 as a mayoral candidate for Vancouver's conservative municipal party, the NPA.

And here's the troubling thing about this confusing, mish-mosh of a party: Liberalism and conservatism are different ideologies. In the Venn diagram of political theory, there are indeed places where liberalism and conservatism intersect, such as on the belief in the removal of barriers to trade.

But key to liberalism is the belief in progress, in the possibility of doing things better, and in the usefulness of taxing and spending on certain social goods to help raise everyone's standard of living.

Conservatism favours people taking total financial responsibility for themselves instead of relying on social services, doing things the way they've always been done, and keeping government spending as low as possible.

On issues like funding for public transit, continuing to advance B.C.'s climate-policy leadership, funding for special-needs assistants in schools and B.C.'s broken foster-care system, Clark and the B.C. Liberals have repeatedly shown their true conservative colours. Keeping taxes low trumps all other considerations.

To its credit, the party has considered changing its name several times over the last 20 years. Clark even told the Globe and Mail before the last provincial election that "The problem with the name 'Liberal' is that it's not inclusive enough, because there is a federal party that shares the name."

But ultimately they have always abandoned the name-change because they keep winning under the Liberal banner — adopting the unabashed position that, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

I can't say I blame them, but that doesn't make it right, or good for our democracy.

I confirmed with the party last week that it is still not considering a name change, regardless of Trudeau's rise to power.

The response was that they will be sticking with the way things have always been done — which is about as conservative a statement as they come.

Everybody's party The problem with Christy Clark's coalition of liberals and conservatives is the incongruous "mish-mosh" of ideologies, writes Kate Webb.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Kate Webb is an unapologetic muckraker and political junkie who lives and writes in Vancouver. Find her on Twitter @k8isenough.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

Make peace with holiday chaos and savour the season

I met a friend for coffee, and neither of us had words for how we're doing.

"Blaahh!" she said with her hands flailing in the air.

It had taken us an extended series of emails to finally pick a time and place to meet — we're each busy, our brains full, at this time of year. She has better reasons: kids, the culmination of a few major projects, the anticipation of a few more. But even I — who normally have ample time for Gilmore Girls reruns — have been packing my days with holiday get-togethers tight as a bulging suitcase.

My sense of calm is out the window, and it's wonderful.

The drink date with a few friends where I meet someone new, funny and charmingly opinionated.

The dinner date where we decided to attend one random event a week in 2016 and call it The Outing (Salsa! Pottery! An academic lecture of the esoteric kind!).

The lunch with my aunt and uncle where politics stayed off the table and we bonded over old stories of my grandmother, which expand in the retelling.

The brunch/skate/The Power Plant gallery trip where we ate slowly, slid on ice as the lake water rippled by and found ourselves in a beautiful, yet repellent, infestation of black paper butterflies.

It doesn't take much to see the precious side.

The drunken debate over communism at the pub. The "once a year whether you need it or not" lunch with an old family friend and his joke-ready compatriots. The cosy, classic dinner at my home away from home.

And the other morning's coffee date, which left me excited about everything, and convinced of all things hopeful, most especially the joy of new friends.

In a city where I can go months without seeing some people, this time of year is a whirlwind of love, a helter-skelter romp through relationships, a fast-track reminder of how lucky I am, how rich in kind people.

This is the Christmas feeling. Of time well spent. Each little visit its own small gift. Its own chance to be smitten, and to feel good about who you are, and where you are, and who you know. That can be an elusive sense much of the year, when you're just trying to get by, and get something done, while the world seems held up by intractable wars, unfathomable suffering and impending doom of one kind or another.

Perhaps it is, but it is not only.

And as it turns out, it doesn't take much, or long, to see the precious side.

Just a cup of coffee.

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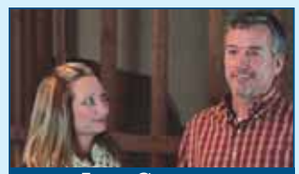

John Cooksey

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metro LIFE
Your essential daily news
Tuesday, December 15, 2015

Fans get chance to say Hello to Adele
Singer to embark on 56-night North American tour in 2016 with stops in Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver.

Period pieces are trending

APPS

Women's health goes high-tech

In the tech world, women's health is at the forefront — with hundreds of apps focusing on everything from getting pregnant to detecting breast cancer. Lots of other high-tech products in the works too, from Bluetooth-connected menstrual cups to high-tech pill cases that send an alert to your phone if you skip your birth control.

Not surprisingly, women around the world are embracing it all.

Travel writer Natalie Preddie Zamojc, 30, and her husband Mark are trying to have a baby, and Zamojc is using a popular period tracking app — aptly named Period Tracker — to see when she's most fertile. It gives her a sense of control over a process that's often based on luck, she says.

"Now, it'll send me a message being like, "You've ovulating!" and then it's go, go, go," Zamojc says with a laugh.

As the New York Times reported earlier this year, two period tracking apps alone — GP International's Period Tracker, the app Zamojc swears by, and Abishkking's Period Calendar/Tracker — have been downloaded more than 10 million times from the Android store, based on data from the IMS Institute for Healthcare Informatics.

Pillsy, an app coupled with a unique pouch, helps women keep on top of taking their birth control. COLE BURSTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Recently, thousands backed a Kickstarter campaign for the Looncup, raising over $160,000 for the silicone cup that sends fluid volume updates to your phone or Apple Watch through a sensor.

And, according to a 2014 TechCrunch report, women's health apps raised more money in the previous year "than all other health-focused apps combined."

It's a big business — and one that's empowering for women, says Toronto-based sexual health educator Lyba Spring. "Anything that gives a woman more control over her reproductive health and her fertility… is a good thing," she says. Certain aspects of women's health should involve a family doctor, Spring adds — like understanding the changes in cervical mucus, for instance — but for basic health and fertility issues, apps are definitely useful, she says.

Jennifer Aldoretta, CEO of Groove, an American company whose app of the same name helps women track their cycles, was born out of its founder's own lengthy reproductive health struggles

"My period brought with it horrible cramps," Aldoretta recalls. "I would vomit from the pain."

Aldoretta started doing her own research on reproductive health and hormones, which led her to develop the Groove app, which she now uses to manage her painful cramps without having to take the pill.

The app, which launched for the iPhone in 2014, allows her to track certain physiological changes that occur throughout your menstrual cycle — such as basal body temperature and cervical fluid secretion — which are both influenced by hormone levels, she says.

Apps can definitely be helpful for women, with many offering a "simple, cost-effective way" to prevent, or make possible, a pregnancy, says Dr. Yolanda Kirkham, an obstetrician-gynecologist who works at Women's College Hospital and St. Joseph's Health Centre in Toronto. She's noticed a rise in the number of her patients using period trackers and other apps, she says, and encourages her patients to try them out. Women just need to be smart and research the apps and technology they're using, Kirkham says. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

HEALTH

Birth control reminder
Women on the pill make up nearly half of all unplanned pregnancies. With that in mind, a six-person team of University of Toronto graduate students has been developing Pillsy, a smart pouch and app that knows if someone takes their birth control pill — and reminds them when they don't. "We've had a number of women come to us and say they're anxious and not on the birth control pill, but if they had the Pillsy pouch and app, they'd trust themselves more to go on the birth control pill," says Pillsy CTO Valentin Peretroukhin.

The Looncup sends fluid volume updates to your phone through a sensor.

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Stay healthy this winter

As cold and flu season kicks into high gear, here's what you need to do to get your defenses ready and stay healthy this winter.

First things first — start with a shot of prevention. Vaccination is the number one way to reduce your risk of severe flu symptoms this year. If you want to learn more about the flu shot, ask your Shoppers Drug Mart pharmacist or visit shoppersdrugmart.ca/flushot.

Remember that not all seasonal illnesses are prevented by the flu vaccine. Cold and flu germs are easily spread through contact with contaminated surfaces — anything from door knobs and shopping cart handles to faucets and even items of clothing.

Scrub your hands well with soap and warm water for 15 to 20 seconds after touching anything that might carry germs. Be sure to have hand sanitizer nearby for when you can't wash.

Lack of sleep may compromise the immune system, so missing out on your zzzz's may make you more vulnerable to colds and flu. Sleep better by avoiding heavy meals or large amounts of liquid before bed. Studies suggest that sticking to a sleep schedule is also important for a good night's sleep.

SHUTTERSTOCK

Studies also show that vitamin D may help boost the immune system.

In winter, those of us in northern climates may be missing out on "the sunshine vitamin," so consider loading up on foods rich in vitamin D like milk and salmon. Enhance your diet with a vitamin D supplement or a multivitamin to help you stay healthy this winter.

Feel better when you're under the weather

Even if you're careful about prevention, you still may come down with a bug this winter. Check with your pharmacist to see which medications may be right for you.

For throat and chest

Robitussin Cough Control Extra Strength with Mucus and Phlegm Relief works to relieve sore throat pain, dry coughs and chest congestion.

For sinuses

Otrivin® Saline Severe Congestion Relief is a powerful, naturally sourced nasal spray that unblocks nasal passages and relieves nasal and sinus congestion. Breathe Right® non-medicated nasal strips instantly open up the nose and are available for both adults and kids. Advil® Cold & Sinus opens airways by shrinking swollen nasal passages, making it easier to breathe.

For kids

Children's Advil® relieves fevers in children age 2 to 12 for up to eight hours in three great-tasting flavours.

THESE PRODUCTS MAY NOT BE RIGHT FOR YOU. ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW THE LABEL. ALL IMAGES CONTRIBUTED

TAKE THE ICK OUT OF SICK

Ask your Shoppers Drug Mart Pharmacist about products that can help you and your family feel better this Cough and Cold season.

SHOPPERS DRUG MART

ROSE REISMAN THE SAVVY EATER

THIS WEEK: Holiday Drinks

Two Yuletide favourites are apple cider and eggnog, however one of these bevvies belongs on the naughty list.

PICK THIS

PC Fresh Pressed Sweet Apple Cider

Portion 1 cup
Calories 120
Fat 0 g
Sugar 28 g

SKIP THIS

PC World's Best Egg Nog

Portion 1 cup
Calories 290
Fat 11 g
Sugar 34 g

HERE'S WHY

Equivalent to 2 small Grilled Chicken subs from Mr. Sub

Eggnog packs over double the calories and has 11gm of fat (half of it saturated) compared to the fat-free cider. If you're spiking your 'nog, you're adding even more calories. The cider is purely fresh pressed apples with no filtration process. The sugar comes from the apples themselves. Heat the cider and add some cinnamon and nutmeg. Even a small amount of alcohol will still make for a healthier Yuletide beverage than the eggnog.

Cooking for 1

SINGLE SERVING

Pack a one-portion punch with these shop and prep ideas

Millennials and seniors might be at opposite ends of the spectrum when it comes to age, but many have something in common: difficulty cooking at home for just one person.

For members of the younger generation, they may lack cooking skills, which can make forays into the kitchen intimidating.

"I think for seniors in particular there's that social isolation ... When you're on your own you might not feel like cooking for yourself," says registered dietitian Shannon Crocker.

There are other challenges for singles. Much of the packaged food in grocery stores is geared toward families. Relatively few cookbooks are targeted at preparing meals for one.

But many retailers are embracing single consumers. Some grocery stores roast their own meat and vegetables that can be mixed with grains cooked at home for a nutritious meal, says Crocker of Ancaster, Ont.

And stores commonly have large displays of prepackaged salads or stir-fry kits for added convenience. THE CANADIAN PRESS

SEVEN TASTY TIPS

1. Shop every few days for smaller portions of fresh produce.

2. Buy just what you need at the bulk store. Or find a shopping buddy and split bigger packages.

3. Prep on weekends to save time. Make a casserole or stew, then freeze in individual portions. Make a batch of barley or pasta to parcel out during the week.

4. Reinvent leftovers. Roast a pan of veggies for one dinner. Toss the remainder with pasta, goat cheese and nuts another night.

5. A small tin of tuna, a couple of hard-boiled eggs or half a can of chickpeas or black beans can be used to top packaged salad greens for a quick, healthy meal. Or add a serving of grilled meat, fish or shrimp.

6. Meals don't always have to consist of meat, potato or starch and a vegetable. Add lentils to soup or extra veggies to an omelette or sandwich.

7. If you're a tea-and-toast person, look for ways to make toast more nutritious and interesting. Spread whole-grain toast with peanut butter and top with thinly sliced apple and cinnamon. Pop it briefly under the broiler. Or top toast with avocado, hummus and tomato slices. Other options: a fried egg and some sautéed mushrooms; or a soft poached egg and a piece of cheese on toast. Put some arugula under the egg to boost flavour.

Negative thoughts age badly: Study

RESEARCH

Stereotypes about aging affect hearing, memory

If you believe growing old will claim your memory and degrade your senses, it could become a self-fulfilling prophecy, a new study has found.

Negative perceptions about aging, and what will happen to our minds and bodies as the years wear on, can influence how we feel about ourselves and, by extension, have an impact on how we go into that dark night, says a study published in the December issue of Psychology and Aging.

"People's feelings about getting older influence our sensory and cognitive functions," says University of Toronto psychology professor Alison Chasteen, lead author of the study titled Do Negative Views of Aging Influence Memory and Auditory Performance Through Self-Perceived Abilities?

"The worse your view of aging, the worse you tend to feel about your own abilities, and the worse you perform."

Until now, Chasteen says, aging research has focused on performance — and the differences on tests of memory and hearing at various ages.

But there hasn't been much exploration of an aging person's general views on getting older. And how that relates to their own experience. This study, Chasteen says, marks the first time researchers have put all three variables together to try and make links between them.

Between 2012 and 2013, about 301 participants between the ages of 56 and 96 — all with different levels of ability — submitted to a variety of tests at labs on the University of Toronto's downtown campus.

In addition to a hearing test, participants' memories were assessed — they were asked to repeat lists of words they saw on a computer screen and, at other times, heard through headphones. They were tasked with recalling a list of five words after a five-minute delay.

Researchers gauged each participants' views on aging by asking them to rate their level of concern in 15 scenarios that involve growing older.

For instance, they were instructed to choose a number between 1 and 9 to indicate how worried they felt about, say, losing their independence as time wears on or, to be blamed for a car accident because of their age — even if fault was unclear. They were also asked to agree or disagree with statements such as "I am good at remembering names," or "I can easily have a conversation on the telephone."

In a study, participants who scored high on the "fear of aging scale" felt worse about their abilities and also did worse on tests. ISTOCK

"The worse your view of aging, the worse you tend to feel about your own abilities, and the worse you perform."
Alison Chasteen, researcher

Through complex statistical analysis, Chasteen says, researchers discovered that participants who scored high on the "stigma concern scale," and the "fear of aging scale," felt worse about their abilities and, in turn, fared worse on the hearing and memory tests.

The data held up even when researchers considered whether participants who had failing hearing and memories had realistic views of their own abilities, she says.

Individuals interpret their declining abilities in different ways and how they feel about them dictates whether or not they will try, by keeping busy and active, to maintain their function — and stimulate mind and body, Chasteen says.

The study also looked at the relationship between hearing and memory performance. Researchers discovered that seniors who did poorly on hearing tests also performed poorly on memory tests.

That could indicate that some problems remembering might be a function of a senior's inability to hear all the information.

"That could be part of the problem," Chasteen says. "When working with older adults reporting memory problems — we might want to check their hearing."

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DATING DUO

Bieber steps out with Kourtney

This is one I certainly did not see coming. In what could possibly just be a case of some tabloid editor playing around with their celebrity gossip Magnetic Poetry set, Justin Bieber is now rumored to be making kissy-kissy with … Kourtney Kardashian? I think I read that right. The 21-year-old Canadian serial apologist and the 36-year-old recently single reality TV star were spotted hitting up a club in L.A. together recently and departing in the same SUV. And according to CNN, a source says they were "making out," so there you go. Bieber, however, has also been spotted squiring a mystery blonde around town — and on a yachting excursion — but the gossip is that he and the Kardashian who isn't Kim or Khloe are "casually" seeing each other. So there's that.

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metro

JOHANNA SCHNELLER WHAT I'M WATCHING

Captain Raymond Holt, right, and Detective Rosa Diaz do a hilariously deadpan rehearsal Diaz's breakup with Holt's nephew Marcus, in Brooklyn Nine-Nine. CONTRIBUTED

Being funny is all in the delivery

THE SHOW: Brooklyn Nine-Nine, S3, E6 (City/Fox)
THE MOMENT: The Practice Breakup

Captain Raymond Holt (Andre Braugher) and Detective Rosa Diaz (Stephanie Beatriz) are in his office. She's been dating his nephew, Marcus, which has made them hilariously uncomfortable together, because they are the most deadpan, least emotionally demonstrative people on Earth. (Both actors remain straight-faced and even-voiced at all times.)

Now that Diaz is breaking up with Marcus, she and Holt are sad (they like each other), but mainly relieved (they can return to deadpan emotionlessness). "I've been told it helps to acknowledge the dumpee's feelings," Holt says. "Ew," Diaz replies. "Don't worry, we'll practice," he says. She straightens her shoulders. "Marcus," she says to Holt, "I think we should break up." "That makes me feel sad. I am sad," he replies. "Your sadness is noted," she says. "I feel acknowledged," he says. "It will take me eight minutes to collect my things." They smile, albeit tightly. That went well.

To achieve greatness as a sitcom, the humour must cease stemming from one-liners and plot points, and start stemming from the characters simply behaving as their funny selves. Brooklyn Nine-Nine hit that sweet spot early. The characters' foibles and frictions were well-defined, and the actors bounced off each other with glee. At the start of this season, plot intervened — Holt was transferred out of the unit. Thankfully the folks in charge realized their mistake and brought him back home. Now everyone can get back to doing what they do best: pushing each other's buttons, and letting us chuckle at how "them" they are.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

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Canucks still contenders in weak Pacific Division

NHL

Playoff position in tow despite mere six wins in last 20 games

Cam Tucker
Metro | Vancouver

As of Monday morning, the Vancouver Canucks held by the slimmest of margins a playoff position in the Western Conference.

Subject to change throughout the course of the evening, with the Edmonton Oilers playing in Boston, but still an astonishing fact. The Canucks, following Sunday's loss to the Chicago Blackhawks, are meandering along with an 11-12-8 record. It's also an indictment of the Pacific Division's current state where teams No. 2 through No. 7 are separated by three points.

With the exception of the L.A. Kings, every other team in the Pacific seems to be stuck in a thick mud of mediocrity.

The Canucks sat third in the division as of Monday morning. The top three teams from each division in the league qualify for the playoffs, followed by the two wild-card teams, which, as per the NHL, are the next-highest finishers in each conference.

The fact Vancouver was among the playoff teams as of Monday despite losses piling up since early November is bewildering.

Despite six wins in their last 20 games, the Canucks are still somehow keeping their heads above the muck. But for how much longer can they possibly do that?

If not for being in a weak division, it would've already started to happen by now.

Daniel and Henrik Sedin have also had something to do about it. The play of the 35-year-old twins, especially since Nov. 10, is literally the only reason talk in these parts of the Auston Matthews sweepstakes is still somewhat premature.

Despite their age, the Sedin twins have carried this team. On so many nights, they've basically been Vancouver's best hopes to win. The struggles of everyone else up and down the lineup has been persistent for some time.

In seven of the last eight games, the Canucks have scored two or fewer goals.

And now the depth of their team on defence and up the middle is being tested with long-term injuries to defenceman Dan Hamhuis and centre Brandon Sutter.

Murky times for the Canucks as they navigate this six-game road trip. And yet, the playoffs right now remain an attainable goal.

Is it parity or parody in the Pacific Division?

Left-winger Chris Higgins loses his stick next to the Blackhawks' Bryan Bickell during the Canucks' 4-0 loss on Sunday night.
ANDREW A. NILES/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

40

The Kings leads the Pacific Division with 40 points.

IN BRIEF

Oilers push winning streak to six games

Andrej Sekera scored 41 seconds into overtime to lift the Edmonton Oilers to their sixth straight win, 3-2 over the Boston Bruins on Monday night.

Cam Talbot made 47 saves, and Jordan Eberle and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins scored first-period goals for Edmonton. The victory halted an eight-game losing streak in Boston for the Oilers, fresh off a 5-0 homestand — their best since 1987.

The Oilers won the overtime faceoff, rushed into the Boston zone and Sekera won it with a wrister from the slot after Jonas Gustavsson stopped one shot.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Coaching change fails to spur Pens to victory

T.J. Oshie scored twice and added an assist as the Washington Capitals spoiled Mike Sullivan's head coaching debut for the Pittsburgh Penguins in a 4-1 win on Monday night.

Nicklas Backstrom had a goal and two assists for Washington. John Carlson added his fifth goal of the season for the Metropolitan Division leaders. Braden Holtby stopped 44 of Pittsburgh's season-high 45 shots.

Evgeni Malkin scored his team-leading 14th goal for the Penguins, who fired Mike Johnston over the weekend.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TENNIS

Serena honoured after 'amazing' year

Serena Williams is Sports Illustrated's Sportsperson of the Year — the first female athlete honoured on her own by the magazine in more than 30 years.

Williams came within two matches of tennis' first calendar-year Grand Slam since 1988, a bid that ended with a semifinal loss at the U.S. Open.

In all, the 34-year-old American went 53-3 during 2015 with five titles, including at the Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon. Williams was No. 1 in the WTA rankings all season.

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

"She was the most deserving person for the award. She had an amazing year. The way she won her events; the fact that she's done this for so many years at such a high level," said Paul Fichtenbaum, editor of the Sports Illustrated Group.

"She was a terrific candidate in a year of terrific candidates."

The cover photo of Williams — in high heels, sitting on a throne — was "her idea, intended ... to express her own ideal of femininity, strength, power," managing editor Christian Stone wrote on SI.com.

Runner Mary Decker in 1983 was the last female athlete to earn the magazine's award by herself. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB IN BRIEF

Mariners sign Cishek

The Seattle Mariners' offseason makeover continued Monday with the club signing right-handed reliever Steve Cishek to a two-year contract with the opportunity to end up as the team's closer.

Cishek, 29, split last season with Miami and St. Louis and appeared in 59 games combined for the two teams. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cueto to join Giants' ranks

The San Francisco Giants' upgraded rotation is taking shape, with the 2014 World Series champions agreeing Monday with Johnny Cueto on a six-year contract.

Cueto, who won the 2015 World Series with the Royals, is set to join a rotation led by left-hander Madison Bumgarner after formalizing his $90 million, five-year contract. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Depleted Seahawks leaning on Wilson

NFL

QB's brilliant form making up for Seattle's injury woes

As the Seattle Seahawks continue their roll toward the post-season in part because of record-setting play for Russell Wilson, they keep running into roadblocks.

First was the abdominal surgery that put Marshawn Lynch on the bench. Then the knee injury to Jimmy Graham that ended his first season with Seattle prematurely.

And most recently, the broken ankle and ligament damage suffered on Sunday in Seattle's 35-6 win over Baltimore by rookie running back Thomas Rawls, who had proven more than capable as Lynch's replacement.

Marshawn Lynch is one of Seattle's biggest casulties. GETTY IMAGES

STATS

Wilson's past four games have been remarkable. According to STATS, Wilson is the first quarterback going back to 1960 to have four straight games with a passer rating of 138.5 or higher. He's thrown for 1,171 yards, completed 75.4 per cent of his throws, thrown 16 touchdowns and had zero interceptions.

In a way, all those obstacles have made what Wilson and the Seahawks have accomplished over the past four weeks even more impressive.

Wilson has put together one of the finest four-week stretches of quarterbacking at least in Seattle history, putting together a string of performances that are tough to match and propelled the Seahawks back into the discussion among the favourites in the NFC even if their playoff path is almost certain to be as a wild-card team.

But now the question will be can the Seahawks keep this stretch of exceptional offensive play going forward with yet another significant loss on offence.

"Our commitment is going to stay the same because we have a balance that we really play with. We have a philosophy and an approach that doesn't need to be changed right now," Seattle coach Pete Carroll said on Monday.

"If we were having issues and troubles then maybe something would happen. The whole idea of being a balanced attack is when you need it you can go to it and if we need to throw the football more we will. If we need to run the football more we will." And he's done most of it without needing to run for safety and scrambling from the pass rush. Seattle's offensive line has been equal to its quarterback and allowed Wilson to throw on time and without stress.

"When everything starts functioning right it can just go," Carroll said. "There's been a lot of years where we've had really good finishes and score a lot of points and put up a lot of numbers and this is like that." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

QB Russell Wilson has been a reliable port in a storm of injuries for the Seahawks. ROB CARR/GETTY IMAGES

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RECIPE Slow Cooker Butter Chicken

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

A dreamy version of the traditional Indian dish using healthy coconut oil instead of butter.

Ready in
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 6 hours
Serves 6

Ingredients
- 2 lb chicken thighs or breasts, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 onion, chopped
- 4 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 tsp minced ginger
- 147 ml tube of tomato paste
- 1 heaping Tbsp curry
- 1 400 ml can coconut milk
- 1/2 cup Greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup milk
- 2 Tbsp coconut oil
- Small handful of cilantro for garnish

Directions
1. Put everything in the slow cooker and stir it all around.
2. Close the lid. Set the timer for 6 hours. Don't worry if you need to be away from home for 8 hours or longer — it will be okay.
3. Serve with a big spoonful of jasmine rice and a sprinkling of cilantro.

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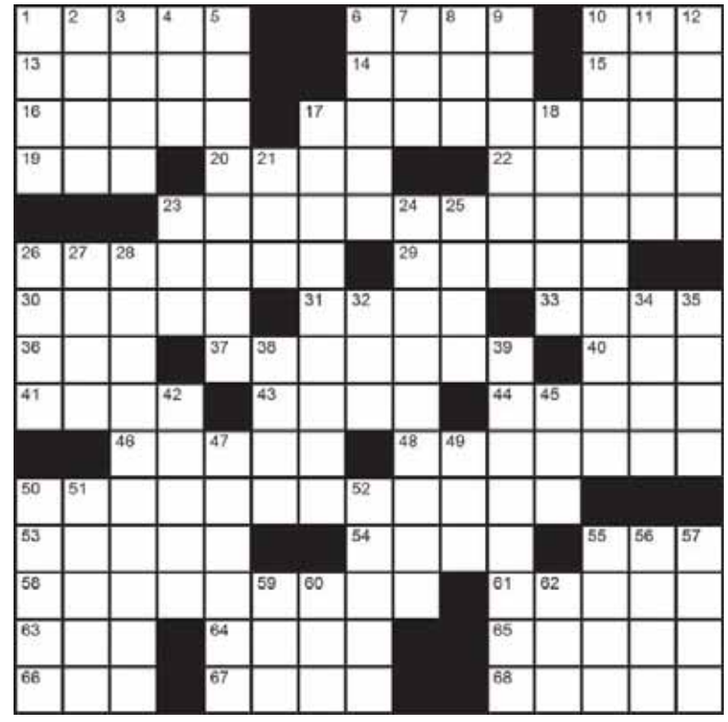
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Cook the broccoli
6. Actor Jared
10. Bar serving
13. Red Hot _ Peppers
14. Architect Mr. Saarinen
15. 'Passion' suffix
16. Paddled
17. Vancouver's province denizen, British _
19. Suit part
20. Intend
22. "Doctor Zhivago" (1965) character
23. Song from Leonard Cohen's 2014 'Popular Problems' album that goes "But I was taken out of Egypt / I was bound to a burden...": 3 wds.
26. Mr. Hall of TV talk
29. Buddy of "The Beverly Hillbillies"
30. _ Ste. Marie, ON
31. Coat the highway
33. Increases twofold, for short
36. Baby dog
37. Cobblers, at times
40. 'King' of France
41. Winter hill ride
43. A _ _ (Record company division)
44. Take away weapons
46. Steal, archaically
48. Canadian comic actor Rick
50. Foothills of The Rockies destination in BC known for dinosaur tracks: 2 wds.
53. Has _ _ (Is able to escape)
54. "Dedicated to the _ _ Love" by The Shirelles
55. "Huh...?"
58. Hockey: Sidney Crosby's nickname: 3 wds.
61. Someone sympathetic
63. Hot season in Montreal
64. Crossed out
65. Stave off
66. Hotdog's li'l topping
67. Off-road rides, commonly
68. Loans

DOWN
1. Glaswegian
2. Popular cuisine
3. Ireland
4. Bitter _
5. 15th or 16th on Salt Lake City's state, variantly
12. Ms. Suvari's
17. Kitchen gadget: 2 wds.
18. Blatted
21. Verdi aria: "_ Tu"
23. Opera singing style, _ canto
24. Leonard Cohen song (from the album at #23-Across) which is the theme tune of the most recent season of HBO's "True Detective"
25. Trucker-to-trucker talker
26. Some slitherers
27. Mr. Julia
28. Linda Evangelista, for one
32. Municipal council member, e.g.
34. Ms. Loughlin
35. A famous Molly
38. Icicle holder
39. _ mask (Operating room necessity)
42. Launch
45. Hebrides 'no'
47. Tennis legend Ms. Gibson
49. Keats specialty
50. Electroshock-er
51. Amalgamate
52. Banned-in-sports substances, slang-style
55. Small songbird
56. Farm group
57. Mr. Linkletter's
59. _. number
60. Mr. Bacon, briefly
62. Street sort, shortly
calendars
6. A famous Tea
7. Conger, for one
8. _-Paz (Canadian Hip Hop group)
9. Pizazzes
10. Kellogg's cereal with 'Two Scoops!': 2 wds.
11. Someone from

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
You seem more easy-going and that's good. However, where money is concerned you cannot afford to be too laid-back or you will attract hangers-on and spongers and find yourself out of pocket. Watch your cashflow.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Partnership matters will go smoothly after the upsets and upheavals of recent weeks. You are a lot less competitive, and a lot more relaxed, in one-to-one situations.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Cosmic activity in your opposite sign of Sagittarius will remind you that you cannot always be top dog. If you want to get things done you must be ready to work with others.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Avoid stressful situations, especially if you are the kind of Cancer who gets upset when things go wrong. Nothing can be allowed to put your health at risk.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Raise your sights and show the world what you are capable of. Don't allow yourself to be distracted by trivial things, and don't try to be all things to all people.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Others may complain that nothing is happening but life is what you make of it and you are determined to make something really good. Show all the moaning minnies what a positive attitude can accomplish!

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Do you carry on along your present course or do you change direction and try something different? It might help to talk it over with friends and family. They can see your situation from a less personal perspective.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You need to take your cashflow situation more seriously than you have been. If resources are low then there are only two ways to build them up again: spend less or earn more.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Don't be scared to take a few chances and try your hand at something new. Leave your comfort zone and accomplish something truly worthwhile.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
If you do a good deed today you will be rewarded for it in the future. You would do it anyway even if you knew you would get nothing out of it — that's the kind of person you are!

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
What's coming into your life may seem like something you haven't earned but that's the wrong way to look at it. If you're being favoured it's because you have done something in the past that has helped others.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
Flattery will take you a long way, but hard work will take you further. Cosmic activity in and around the career area of your chart makes it easy to impress with ideas and enthusiasm.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

	8		6		3		1	
9		5		7		4		6
	6						9	
6			2		7			8
	7			8			6	
3			9		5			2
	5						7	
4		3		2		1		5
	2		1		9		3	

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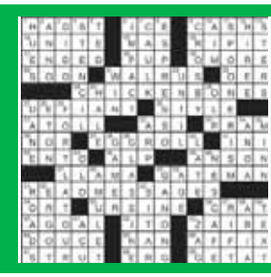

2	9	4	1	8	6	7	5	3
3	1	5	4	9	7	8	6	2
6	7	8	5	3	2	1	4	9
9	3	6	7	5	8	4	2	1
8	2	1	9	6	4	3	7	5
4	5	7	2	1	3	9	8	6
5	8	3	6	4	9	2	1	7
7	6	9	8	2	1	5	3	4
1	4	2	3	7	5	6	9	8

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